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UNITED STATES PATENT APPLICATION

LOTTERY TICKET PLAY ACTION GAME

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LOTTERY TICKET PLAY ACTION GAME

Field Of The Invention

The present invention is directed to a lottery ticket in which the play action game is based on chance or is controlled by the player. The play action game provides for movement of the player through a grid of play regions in which each play region may be provided with a prize supporting symbol, a prize defeating symbol or a directional symbol advising the player to proceed to another play region. The player may win a prize if he or she uncovers a prize supporting symbol and/or accumulates a minimum number of prize supporting symbols before obtaining a preselected number of prize defeating symbols.

Background Of The Invention

Scratch-off lottery tickets are common in the lottery industry. Game data is covered by a scratch-off layer and when the scratch-off layer is removed, the game data is exposed. Once the scratch-off layer is removed, if the game symbols provide a certain pattern (e.g. three of the same symbol) the player may win a prize. Thus, the typical scratch-off lottery tickets require the player to remove the scratch-off layer and immediately determine what prize has been won.

It is desirable in the scratch-off lottery industry to provide lottery tickets which not only provide the opportunity to win a prize, but also provide the opportunity to play a

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game which adds to the value and entertainment of the lottery ticket itself. One class of such games are games based on chance in which the outcome of the game and whether a prize is won is solely determined by the lottery ticket itself. Another class of games are called probability games in which the player has some control over the actions taken to seek a prize. Both classes of games provide excitement and stimulation because they provide the added element of playing a game in addition to the opportunity to win a prize.

It would therefore be a significant advance in the scratch-off industry to provide a lottery game which can be based on chance or probability and provide the player the opportunity to play a game and possibility of winning a valuable prize.

Summary Of The Invention

The present invention is generally directed to a lottery ticket having a play area in the form of a plurality of individual play regions each covered by a scratch-off layer. The play area itself may contain all of the game playing indicia including instructions for uncovering individual play regions or a second play area (e.g. a directional region) may be provided for directing the player as to which individual play regions are to be uncovered. The player proceeds from a starting point and may continue the game until the relevant game playing indicia have been exposed. The play action game may be played as a game of chance or a probability game.

In one particular aspect of the present invention, there is provided a lottery ticket having a play action game with a play area comprising a grid of individual play regions with each play region containing a prize supporting symbol, a prize defeating symbol, or a directional symbol advising the player to proceed to another play region, wherein
5 a prize is won if the player accumulates at least a minimum number of prize supporting symbols. In one aspect of the play action game the minimum number of prize supporting symbols must be uncovered before accumulating a preselected number of prize defeating symbols. The play area is covered by a removable scratch-off layer which is removed to reveal the individual play regions.

10 In this embodiment of the invention, the game may be based on chance by having the lottery ticket itself direct the player to a preselected starting point in the form of a preselected individual play region. In this way, the outcome of the play action game is predetermined because the player's moves are controlled by the preselection of the starting point.

15 The game may be played as a probability game wherein the player selects his or her own starting point which could be in the form of an individual play region and thus the course of the play action game and the outcome is determined by the player.

In a further aspect of the present invention, the game playing indicia which control which particular individual play regions may be uncovered are located in a
20 second area in the form of a separate region (i.e. a directional region) from the first play

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area. This aspect of the play action may be played as a game of chance or as a probability game.

When played as a game of chance, the separate region contains a predetermined number of directional areas, each containing indicia identifying an individual play region which is to be uncovered. The player is required to expose all directional areas within the directional area to play the game. In this way, the outcome of the game is predetermined by the lottery ticket itself.

When played as a probability game, the directional region may also contains a predetermined number of directional areas. However, the player is required to play less than all of the directional areas and selects the directional areas to be played and thus the outcome of the game is determined by the player. In addition to or in the alternative, the player chooses which play region he/she wants to scratch first. Therefore, the outcome is determined by the player.

Brief Description Of The Drawings

The following drawings in which like reference characters indicate like parts are illustrative of embodiments of the invention and are not intended to limit the invention as disclosed in the application.

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Figure 1 is a top view of an embodiment of a lottery ticket of the present invention prior to playing in which indicia directing the play action is within the play area;

Figure 2 is a top view of the lottery ticket of Figure 1 showing the removal of the scratch-off layer covering all of the individual play regions;

5 Figure 3 is a graphic illustration showing embodiments of the prize supporting symbols and prize defeating symbols and the number of each which may be required to win a specific prize or to lose the game;

10 Figure 4 is a top view of another embodiment of a lottery ticket of the present invention in which indicia for directing the play action is in a region outside the play area;

15 Figure 5 is a top view of the lottery ticket of Figure 4 showing removal of the scratch-off layers from some of the directional areas and corresponding individual play regions;

20 Figure 6 is a top view of an embodiment of a lottery ticket similar to Figure 4 played as a probability game in which less than all of the directional areas are exposed at the choice of the player; and

Figure 7 is a top view of the lottery ticket of Figure 6 showing removal of the scratch-off layer from less than all of the directional areas and corresponding individual play region.

Detailed Description Of The Invention

5 Referring to Figures 1 and 2 there is shown a lottery ticket as an embodiment of the present invention. The lottery ticket 2 has a top face 4 which includes a play area 6 which includes a plurality of individual play regions 8. The play area 6 may be in any form but must include a minimum of two individual play regions, most preferably five or more play regions. There could be a variety of different formats for the play regions so long as their location can be readily identified by the player in accordance with the instructions of playing the game as described in detail hereinafter. In the specific embodiment shown in Figure 1, the individual play regions 8 are arranged in a plurality of rows 10 (labeled 1-10) and a plurality of columns 12 (labeled columns A-G).

15 In the embodiment shown specifically in Figure 1, a specific play region 8 may therefore be identified by a suitable letter (e.g. B) and a suitable number (e.g. 7) to specifically identify a particular play region (e.g. B7). The play area 6 is covered by a scratch-off layer shown generally by the numeral 14 which may have an overprinting layer thereon with desirable graphics to illustrate the theme of the game.

The lottery ticket of Figure 1 is shown in Figure 2 with the scratch-off layer 14 removed from all of the play regions 8. There is thus revealed for each individual play region 8 a prize supporting symbol, a prize defeating symbol, or a directional symbol as explained in detail hereinafter. In an optional feature of the invention, one or more
5 classes of other symbols may be used to augment the particular symbols mentioned above.

As shown specifically in Figure 2, a prize winning symbol is shown in the play region B2 and is identified by reference numeral 16A. The game area 6 may also contain one or more other types of prize supporting symbols 16B such as that shown
10 in play region 8 identified as G6.

Prize defeating symbols 18 also appear in the play area 6. Such prize defeating symbols are designated by the numeral 18 such as appearing in the play region 8 identified as A1.

The game area 6 in the embodiment of Figures 1 and 2 also includes directional
15 symbols which provide instructions to the player to move from one individual play region to another individual play region. In the embodiment shown in Figure 2, the directional symbols do not include a prize supporting symbol or a prize defeating symbol but such symbols may, optionally, be included as part of the directional symbol. By way of example, if the player lands on the individual play region identified as A6 containing the

phrase "move to D5" then the player must move from that individual play region to the play region D5.

The lottery game in accordance with the embodiment of the lottery ticket shown in Figures 1 and 2 can be played as a game of chance when the player is directed by play instructions provided by the lottery ticket such as in the box 20 marked for example, "Start". The player removes the scratch-off layer from the box 20 and follows the directions within the box. The box will direct the player to a single play region 8. The player then removes the scratch-off layer from that particular play region to begin the game. This individual play region will contain at least one symbol from among prize supporting symbols, prize defeating symbols or directional symbols. If a prize supporting symbol is uncovered, this is applied towards the minimum number of prize supporting symbols needed to win a prize. If a prize defeating symbol is uncovered then this counts toward a preselected number of prize defeating symbols which if obtained results in the player automatically losing the game. If either a prize supporting symbol or a prize defeating symbol is uncovered in the first play region uncovered by the player, there will also be a directional symbol to direct the player to another play region. If the player uncovers a directional symbol, the player follows the directions by moving to the individual play region corresponding to the directional symbol and then follows the directions contained within that particular individual play region.

In the probability game version of the same lottery ticket the "Start" box 20 is not necessary because the player may select any individual play region 8 to begin the

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game. Once the particular play region 8 is selected, the game is played in the same manner as the game of chance version described above.

In the game of chance version, the game continues until the player wins a prize or the player accumulates the preselected number of prize defeating symbols in which event the lottery ticket immediately becomes a losing ticket.

In the probability version, the game continues at the player's discretion until the player is satisfied that he or she has obtained a desired prize or the player accumulates the preselected number of prize defeating symbols (typically from 1 to 3 prize defeating symbols) in which case the lottery ticket immediately becomes a losing ticket.

The player may determine if a prize has been won from a prize designation area which typically appears on the front face of the lottery ticket. One such prize designation area is shown in Figure 3. As shown therein, the presence of two round shaped "bombs" signifies a losing game. The uncovering of two or more stacks of coins results in a winning ticket. If the player uncovers two bombs at any time during play of the play action game, the lottery ticket is immediately a losing ticket. If the player is able to uncover two stacks of coins before uncovering two bombs, then the player can win a prize such as \$2 as shown specifically in Figure 3. Additional stacks of coins results in more valuable prizes such as six stacks of coins resulting in a \$20 prize.

The prize area as shown in Figure 3 may include additional symbols which, for example, may direct the player to uncover any box at his or her selection. As shown specifically in Figure 3, additional prize supporting symbols are provided in the form of “sacks of gold” or “palm trees” wherein uncovering one or more of these symbols results in a different or more valuable prize than that described for the stacks of coins. For example, if the player uncovers two sacks of gold before uncovering two bombs, then he or she may win a more valuable prize than if two stacks of coins are uncovered (e.g. \$500 as opposed to \$2).

Referring to Figures 4-7 there are shown additional embodiments of the invention in the format of a game of chance as well as a probability game. In these embodiments of the invention, the instructions provided by the directional symbols for moving a player in the play area comes from a separate directional region comprised of individual directional areas lying outside of the main or first play area. For the game of chance as shown in Figures 4 and 5, the directional region contains a preselected number of directional areas, all of which are to be uncovered by the player. In the probability game version as shown in Figures 6 and 7, the directional region contains a preselected number of directional areas less than all of which are uncovered by the player. The player does have the opportunity to select which of the preselected directional areas he or she wishes to play as part of the game and thereby controls the ultimate outcome of the game.

Referring to Figures 4 and 5, there is shown a play area 6 which includes a plurality of individual play regions 8. The play area 6 may be in any form but must include a minimum of two individual play regions and may be set up in a manner similar to the embodiment of the invention shown in Figure 1. As shown specifically in Figures 4 and 5, the individual play regions 8 are arranged in a plurality of rows 10 (labeled rows 1-8) and a plurality of columns 12 (labeled columns A-J).

There is provided a second play area in the form of a directional region 30 comprised of a plurality of individual directional areas 32 each having a directional symbol 34 (see Figure 5) covered by a scratch-off layer 36. The directional symbol 34 will identify a particular individual play region 8 which is to be uncovered by the player. Thus, as shown in Figure 5, the individual play regions D2, H5 and J7 have been uncovered in the play area 6. As shown in Figure 5, the three uncovered directional areas D2, H5 and J7, respectively correspond to individual play regions 8 within the play area 6. When the corresponding individual play regions 8 are uncovered, the region D2 shows a directional symbol ("Go To A8"), the region H5 shows the letters "FG" and the play region J7 shows the "TD". In this particular game, the directional symbol (Go To A8) instructs the player to uncover the individual play region A8 which contains a "football" symbol which is not indicative of a prize. On the other hand, the symbol "FG" is indicative of a prize which may be selected from a separate prize region (not shown). The symbol "TD" also indicates a prize which may be selected from an adjacent prize region 40 which when uncovered indicates a dollar sign which may include a specific

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dollar amount or an amount obtained from another region from the lottery ticket (not shown).

As previously explained, the embodiment of Figures 4 and 5 is played as a game of chance so that the player is required to uncover all of the directional areas 32 of the directional region 30. If one or more prize symbols (e.g. "FG" and/or "TD") are uncovered, the player may win a prize.

A probability version of the game shown in the embodiment of Figures 4 and 5 is shown in Figures 6 and 7 wherein the directional region 30 includes a plurality of directional areas 32 only some of which are uncovered by the player. As shown specifically in Figure 7, only four of the fourteen directional areas in the directional region are uncovered and the corresponding individual play regions 8 are exposed in the play area 6. However, in one embodiment of the invention, the individual play regions 8 may contain additional directional symbols requiring the player to move to a different individual play region (e.g. individual play region D4 contains the directional symbol "Go to H8") which requires the player to uncover individual play region H8. The selection of which of the directional 32 areas are to be exposed is within the control of the player, although there can be a limit as to the number of directional areas a player is allowed to uncover in order for the game to be valid. Therefore, the player has some control over whether a prize is won and the ultimate value of the prize.

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Modifications of the present invention will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art and include the use of additional or different prize supporting symbols, prize defeating symbols and other directional symbols which may result in a prize, altering the value of a particular prize or may result in a losing ticket.